

War Funding in the Defense Authorization Bill

Talking points prepared by the staff of the House Armed Services Committee

- The Defense Authorization Bill authorizes \$189.3 billion in supplemental funds for FY08. Only 23% (\$41 billion) directly supports military operations in Iraq.
- The remaining 77% of the supplemental funding supports the effort in Afghanistan, goes to repair damage to our military forces caused by the war in Iraq, and helps reduce the strategic risk caused by having a military tied down in Iraq.
- Restoring the readiness of our forces, repairing equipment, providing adequate force protection, enhancing ground forces and improving military pay and benefits is a priority for this Democratic congress.
- This defense authorization bill should not be confused with an appropriations bill. This bill is meant to set the stage for future debates over war spending, while making policy changes that benefit our troops and their families.
- The authorization bill is addressed once a year, and authorizes all aspects of defense funding in that one bill. In contrast, there are several appropriations bills each year that fund all aspects of defense— one for the regular defense budget and one or more to deal with the additional cost of the wars.
- For war spending, the single authorization bill is meant to set the stage so the House, through the appropriations process, can determine how much to spend and when it's appropriate to do so.